

EMERY COUNTY (UTAH). COMMISSION ^[1232] MINUTES, 1880#

DESCRIPTION: These minute books record the actions of the county commission, the governing body of the county. The commission (known during the territorial period as the county court) was authorized to manage all county business and property. This includes budgeting, equipment purchasing, and auditing; use of county lands; districting for schools, roads, voting, drainage, etc.; taxing, specifically acting as an ex-officio board of equalization; business licensing; arranging for the construction of roads, public buildings, etc.; contracting for services; supervising the conduct and payment of all county personnel; providing for basic health care, public safety, and care of the indigent; canvassing election returns and appointing certain officials; and incorporating municipalities. All these activities are noted in the minutes. The day's entries are prefaced by the date, names of those present, and where and when they met.

Following the formation of territorial government, the legislature in 1852 passed acts relating to the formation and government of counties. There were no county commissions, but the probate judge in conjunction with the county selectmen were invested "with the usual powers and jurisdiction of County Commissioners" and as such were known as the county court. The probate court clerk (also known as the county clerk) was to keep the records of the court. This pattern was followed when Emery County was created by the territorial legislature in February 1880 and organized in March.

The court, was authorized to manage all county business and county property. This included auditing all claims against the county and payments by the treasurer. Court members created election precincts, road districts, sanitary districts and school districts and appointed superintendents of such districts. They located sites and oversaw the erection of public buildings. The selectmen in conjunction with the court were to provide for the maintenance of the poor, insane, and orphans. They levied property taxes for county purposes. Liquor licenses, initially opposed, were granted by the 1890s.

Bids received, and bills and wages paid in conjunctions with the activities are noted, as are regular audits in the 1890s. The predominant activities in the territorial period involve laying out roads. Names of individuals appointed as road supervisors, poundkeepers, quarantine physicians, fruit tree inspectors, etc. are mentioned frequently.

With statehood in 1896 an actual board of county commissioners was created. The probate judge was removed, but the selectmen continued serving as commissioners until elections were held. The county clerk remained the clerk of the board, recording the minutes.

There is an ongoing emphasis on roads and road districts in the early 20th century. The finances of the county also continue to be closely monitored with claims, audits, and bonding issues fully recorded. More franchises#for electricity, railroads, telephone, etc.#are granted and the details recorded. Other responsibilities noted in the minutes include supervision of the conduct of all county, district, and precinct officials, boards, and agencies. Both personnel wage scales and departmental purchases for part of audits and annual budgets. All personnel actions are recorded, by individual name, for county employees; such actions include appointments, hourly or salaried wage increases, requests for car allowances or to use county vehicles, and requests for funds to attend conferences. Requisitions, bid proposals and apportionments are similarly detailed.

Commissioners served as canvassers of elections, also appointing election officers, setting the boundaries of voting districts, and assigning polling places. The members continued as a board of equalization for county property assessments with the added authorization to refund taxes erroneously collected. Tax abatements, tax sales, and redemptions are common from the late 1920s into the 1940s. Commissioners continued to care for the indigent and oversee public health and safety. The commission also continued to grant business licenses and pass ordinances.

More programs were added beginning in the 1940s. The commission assumed responsibility for several irrigation districts and created a drainage district. They also established a library and an air strip. In the 1950s, the commission organized a civil defense program and established a recreation program, including obtaining television transmission. In 1962 the commission formally established a zoning and planning board with themselves serving as the board. In 1968, a separate planning commission was created and authorized to write a master plan. By the 1970s cooperative agreements and grants for social programs, health care, and economic development are commonly recorded.

ARRANGEMENT: The series is arranged chronologically by date of meeting in alphabetically labeled volumes. Volume labeling starts over with volume A in the first new volume started after statehood.

RESEARCH NOTE: Given the diversity and extent of the county commission's activities, the minute books should be consulted not only by researchers seeking information on the

commission, but by those seeking information on any county agencies, their personnel, or their services to individuals; on private contractors and their plans for work on county projects or private subdivisions; on private businesses operating within the unincorporated county limits; and on private individuals or charitable institutions holding taxable or untaxable property within the county. Virtually any person living in, or any activity taking place in, unincorporated areas of Emery county (up to and including the incorporation or disincorporation of municipalities) was affected by the activities of the county commission and is reflected in the minutes.

RELATED RECORDS: While the minute books summarize the meetings of the commission, many other county agencies recorded the particulars. Thus the holdings of other Emery county agencies should be consulted.

PROCESSING NOTE: The Emery County Clerk as secretary for the Emery County Commission should be contacted for current holdings and original volumes which were returned to the office following filming. Filming was begun in 1993. The series was processed by A.C. Cone in July 1995.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description	Volume
1	1880, Mar	A
	8#1891, Mar 4	
1	1891, Apr	B
	16#1896, Jun 27	
2	1896, Jun	A
	29#1907, Mar 6	
2	1907, Apr	B
	1#1917, Aug 6	
3	1917, Aug	C
	6#1926, Feb 1	
3	1926, Mar	D
	1#1941, Dec 2	
4	1942, Jan	E
	5#1959, May 29	
4	1959, Jun	F
	2#1980, July 15	
5	1980, Aug	G
	20#1982, Dec 16	
5	1983, Jan	H
	5#1985, Dec 19	
5	1986, Jan	I
	15#1988, May 18	
6	1988, Jun	J

Reel	Description	Volume
6	1#1990, Dec 14	K
	1991, Jan	
	2#1992, Dec 15	